

Irresponsible Librarianship: a critique of the report of the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control and thoughts on how to proceed

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Part 1. Critique

The Guiding Principles

The report of the Working Group offers three “guiding principles,” these being new rules for the discourse and practice of librarianship. Briefly paraphrased, they are:

- 1) Bibliographic control means managing global information systems from Amazon to Google to Wikipedia. It no longer has anything to do with bibliographical description, i.e. analytical bibliography or cataloging, nor with scholarly communication.
- 2) The Bibliographic Universe consists of all the world’s information. It recognizes no local difference of purpose or action, it no longer has any boundaries whether of place or purpose; all activities of bibliographic control are global activities.
- 3) The Library of Congress must cease to consider its own goals and purposes as its primary mission and follow what everyone decides is best for everyone. The role of the Library of Congress is now to conform. By implication and in accordance with the rest of the report this applies to all libraries everywhere.

These redefinitions guide the report in its recommendations, but there are other, equally important assumptions, including: 1) the inevitability and desirability of a global socio-technical system in what I think are its most undesirable aspects —control without borders, disregard of the local and of differences— 2) the primacy of efficiency as a value, and 3) exploitation is an efficient means of cooperation.

The report adopts a rhetoric that confidently asserts what the future will be, what we must do, and must do without delay. The future is predicted to be a global system based on two decades old technology. The Working Group is repeating the perennial folly of identifying tomorrow’s technology with today’s.

The demand for efficiency begs the question of what we are trying to do in our activities of bibliographic control, i.e. efficient at doing what? If the goal of bibliographic control is understood to be an activity in support of the scientific and scholarly practices of citation, literature search and exploration then the evaluation of efficiency cannot be separated from user success in those activities.

The Working Group Calls for a Unified Philosophy of Bibliographic Control

We read that “Users would be better served if access to these materials were provided in the context of a unified philosophy of bibliographic control” but there is no philosophy here, just the management of a network of technical systems. What might a unified philosophy of bibliographic control be? Would it not have to deal with language (which the report simply regards as a problem to be solved by URIs) and with communication as human activities, rather than simply with the technical aspects of communication systems? Human communication plays no role whatsoever in the Working Group’s understanding of the library.

R.G. Collingwood argued that the meaning of any statement must be related to the question it is intended to answer. This understanding of meaning was further developed by philosopher Michel Meyer and the linguist Roy Harris, the latter stating the matter succinctly: meaning is radically indeterminate. In Meyer's understanding of human communication, questions are always prior and they always arise from the problems of living in a universe in which we do not know the answers but wish to understand each other and act in the world together. The answers we give are not only always provisional but they are also always debatable because the questions themselves arise from our problems, our not knowing something.

If librarianship involves an engagement with users and their questions, then it cannot be understood as simply the management of technical systems and the information given. What is relevant to any particular question will be determined by the question, and that question cannot be present to any information system. All that is present to the technical system is a string of text and a universe of information that contains only answers given to previous questions arising in different situations.

Go to the University of Chicago library website and open up LENS. Type in "Roy Harris" and see what comes up. I did this with the question in mind "What do we have on or by Roy Harris the linguist?" That my question was not present to the system is evident not only in the results given—arranged by a system definition of "relevance"—but in the absurd word cloud associated on the side and the suggestion of 1273 different authors who "matched" my query. Typing "Michel Meyer" will produce very similar results, yet in his case I have already done a lot of authority work and error correction on most of the records for his works.

If communication presupposes co-operation understood as doing something together for a reason, then we can understand why the information system has such difficulty in making any sense: the information system cannot co-operate with anyone for it is not doing anything for a reason. Roy Harris' word cloud in LENS presents a perfect example of the operation of the technical system. It suggested *par, qui, que, les, pour* along with other French words, and as spelling variants, *rye, ryoi, charris* and *farris*. Now that is truly what I call ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: automatic generation of responses totally unrelated to MY question. For systems engineers this is perhaps no problem, just an indication of the need to refine some algorithm, etc. But what is the effect of such responses on the human user of the system? Cultural theorist Paul Virilio suggested a defeat of facts, a tragedy of knowledge, a global accident of meaninglessness.

Roy Harris' word cloud does not mean that LENS is useless. Far from it. LENS is a very valuable tool that any intelligent user can use. Ignoring the items by and about Roy Harris the composer, the catalogues of California earthquakes and many other irrelevant items, the user can find enough books by and about Roy Harris the linguist to get what he or she needs. And that is precisely my point: an informed user who intelligently interprets and responds to the information given can accomplish what he or she set out to do. But let us not confuse the successful results of that intelligent *user* behaviour with the *system's* behaviour and describe the "bibliographic control system" as intelligent.

The technical system does not co-operate with the user, rather the user uses the system for his or her purposes. Those with whom the library user is really co-operating are the persons who create the information entered into the system and the designers who attempt to develop a system in response to known practices. These forms of co-operation are what make the system work, but this co-operation depends on real relationships among users, librarians and designers or else the problems and questions of the users will remain poorly understood or simply unknown to those creating and managing the information system.

Communities of Practice

Of particular interest to music librarians is that the Working Group's single vision of our future as a technical production/problem gives no attention to the place of non-technical knowledge in the library. In this future, librarianship has nothing to do with any disciplinary knowledge except LIS. The redefinition of bibliographic control considers that activity to be a matter of managing rather than establishing relationships, a shift definitely reflecting the reorientation away from institutional purposes and user practices and towards management of abstractions as though those abstract entities posited by FRBR have no special relationships to communities of practice.

On page 10 of the report we read that "separation of the communities of practice that manage [different resource types] is no longer desirable, sustainable, or functional," and "Consistency of description ... is becoming less significant than the ability to make connections between environments." The implications of this are difficult to grasp. The "different communities of bibliographic practice" mentioned refer to those who manage different formats in the library; there is no reference here to user communities, nor to disciplinary differences. Do music librarians manage stuff or do all of their activities relate to user communities of interest and their needs? Your answer ought to be that you do both: the former to serve the latter. The Working Group simply failed to consider the latter.

The Old versus The New

Further on we read that "bibliographical control cannot continue to be seen as being limited to library catalogs" but of course it never was. The authors of the report wish to make this claim in order to present all that other bibliographic information as now, thanks to the World Wide Web, finally available for library reuse.

Legacy data—data "not designed for the current and emerging machine environment"—is data created for other uses, for past practices involving past technical systems and their users. The problems we are now experiencing with legacy data are the same problems that we now encounter and will always encounter with any data created elsewhere, by others and at times other than our present needs. It is the problem of reuse. This includes not only technical problems of interoperability but problems of differences in purposes, practices and user communities. Metadata reuse is not the solution as the Working Group insists, but the source of many of our problems, itself a problem to be dealt with.

By calling for the harvesting and reuse of information produced in other areas of the library and outside it, bibliographic control must now extend over and include all information including citation, quotation, criticism and computational analysis. That seems to be a big move: it is nothing less than claiming that the research process is now to be performed by the bibliographic control system, not the user. But how much will future practices of users and librarians differ

from current and previous practices even given such a system? Whereas formerly the librarian and the user went from one card or volume or shelf to the next depending on the sources consulted, now the move is from link to link. Yet the practice of research remains the same as always: determining what you want to look for, deciding how to go about looking for it, evaluating what turns up and so on. Looking only at the technical process, then yes, the report rightly describes this as a "dramatic transformation"; if we look at research in libraries as an intellectual activity, then it has hardly changed at all. Perspective in this matter is everything.

Cooperation or Reliance?

The assumption that "bibliographic control" is the management of a technical system global in scope requires the Working Group to stipulate its organizational prerequisites. Thus the report overflows with calls for coordination, cooperation, decentralization, taking responsibility, eliminating barriers to sharing and reuse of metadata, all of which sounds so nice to our ears. I, at least, am all for it! Yet this language serves to hide the problems rather than reveal them. The Working Group offers cooperation and reuse as solutions that must be adopted, but any of you who have tried to cooperate, decentralize, take responsibility, or reuse metadata will know that our main *problems* proceed from these activities—not our solutions.

The Working Group's understanding of cooperation is that we can create basic records that serve our institution well enough and they will also be available for other institutions to enhance or otherwise alter to suit their purposes. This is all splendid except that we notice that this is not an option, it is obligatory. Sharing and cooperation is an obligation now because LC (and all of us) have to *rely* on the work of others. That little word **RELY** slipped in there because it had to. We have been told that the information is already there and all we have to do is decide how to utilize it. But as soon as LC and other libraries can create basic records that others will find it *necessary* to enhance, in order for it to serve their purposes, cooperation and sharing become obligatory because what the report does not say and even denies is that those basic records indicate the absence—not the presence—of information just waiting to be tapped. A more carefully considered understanding of cooperation would see that cooperation requires not only commonly agreed upon goals and standards, but that everyone involved must fulfill those goals according to those standards in every action they undertake.

We should also especially note that last admonition for LC to consider when to discontinue its efforts. It is one thing to discontinue efforts when changing circumstances mean that the goals of the library are no longer served by those efforts; it is quite another matter when those efforts are discontinued on the assumption that someone else will take over the burden of making just those efforts for us, for that is not cooperating with others, it is exploiting them.

The relationships created by relying on others within a system designed for exploitation of given resources are praised as cooperation and collaboration in one paragraph but decried as dependencies in another. Compare the following statements:

LC may need to be able to rely on the work of others (p. 11)

Long-term dependence on Library of Congress bibliographic services leaves the users of those services increasingly vulnerable to any changes in them. (p. 17)

How are we to comprehend a report that demands that LC must depend on bibliographic data produced by others for their purposes when at the same time we are warned that our dependence on LC leaves us increasingly vulnerable to any changes? This warning applies to all dependencies on external data sources and is a major problem for understanding and implementing the proposed recommendations of the Working Group.

Difference in the Bibliographic Universe

Cataloging and collection development according to the demands of local purposes, users and budgets is replaced by the demand that everything be controlled. We may recall Deanna Marcum's earlier statement "the intellectual integrity of collections built and nurtured by knowledgeable individuals is a lasting tribute to the scholarly community. This is the function that may not be readily accommodated in a digital library."¹ The report assumes that the "explosion of materials" must be under our "bibliographic control" and since we cannot afford to control all of it item by item "the model of item-by-item manual transcription can no longer be sustained." What the report fails to note is that the past model of item by item description was coupled with policies regarding collection development. Collection development, we know, has long been regarded as impossible in a web environment, and undesirable at that, since we now want everything.

The universe of information is assumed to be a given commodity which libraries will exploit, NOT a developing resource which we are creating together for a particular purpose. By treating the differences among the various creators and users of information as irrelevant to bibliographic control, all information in the bibliographic universe can be treated as simply given to us ready made and available for exploitation. But libraries have some difficulties exploiting publishers and when they want cooperation they find that it presupposes common goals and purposes, neither of which exist in the bibliographic universe.

Significant differences among the actors in the bibliographic universe are denied or declared insignificant in some recommendations, but emphasized and remedies proposed in others. Compare the following recommendations.

1.1.1.1. Be more flexible in accepting bibliographic data from others ... that do not conform precisely to U.S. library standards

1.1.1.6. Demonstrate to publishers the business advantages of supplying complete and accurate metadata

1.2.1.1. Share responsibility for creating original cataloging according to interest, use and ability

1.1.3. Develop content and format guidelines for submission of ONIX data to the CIP program and require publishers participating in the program to comply with these guidelines.

2.1.2.1. All: Adopt as a guiding principle that some level of access must be provided to all materials as a first step to comprehensive access, as appropriate. Allow for different cataloging levels depending on the types of documents, their nature, and richness.

¹ Deanna Marcum, "Digital libraries: For whom? For what?" *Journal of academic librarianship* v.23, March 1997, p.81-84.

The first and fifth recommendations allow for differences in cataloging levels but the second and fourth refuse to admit them. We are asked to share data that does not conform to our local standards (1.1.1.1) but at the same time to share responsibility for creating data according to the local context, i.e. interest, use and ability (1.2.1.1). And so on, and so forth. Given that we are urged to share all “changes that might benefit the broader community” (p. 13) and to take advantage of the “many other sources of data” including user-contributed and computationally derived information that might be useful, what can “complete and accurate metadata” possibly mean for anyone in the “supply chain”? The notions of complete and accurate are inseparable from purposes and the practices which support them, and thus this appeal across “communities of bibliographic practice” constitutes the denial of the fundamental problem which is then proffered as the solution to a different problem, the interoperability of technical systems. In this global fantasy all differences among “players” are ignored or their importance denied.

The allowance for different cataloging levels according to “the types of documents, their nature, and richness” in 2.1.2.1 is made in reference to rare, unique and non-print materials and must be read in connection with the demand that item-by-item description is no longer a sustainable model. We are called to redirect resources towards these materials instead of those materials that have received priority in the past, but unique and non-print materials require not only item-by-item description but far more description as well, due to their nature, and even more if they are digitized. The issue here is straightforward: libraries have “hidden collections” because they at one time decided that certain materials had a lower priority at their institution than some other kinds of materials. The Working Group is simply telling us that we have all got our priorities backwards. I do not deny the importance of the diverse materials held in “hidden collections,” but the relative importance of materials is a decision that individual institutions ought to make, not the Working Group.

In regard to recommendation 1.1.3.2. concerning the automatic acceptance of publisher data, the Library of Congress response shows a much clearer grasp of the realities of the technical situation than does the Working Group. There we read *Do not support, because incompatibilities between ONIX and ECIP programming and publishers' workflows make this unworkable at this time. ... not all resources will lend themselves easily to this treatment.* It is good to see that LC understands not only lack of use of ONIX but technical incompatibilities make accepting “these data in a fully automated fashion” unworkable, but it is disappointing to see that issues related to user purposes and their communities of practice are not considered in either the recommendation or the response.

The Working Group has a clear understanding of the necessities of standards for data transmission but has no corresponding understanding of any standards related to social practices and communities of interest. Differences among the various “players” were ignored by the Working Group apparently on the assumption that those differences can be accommodated within the right technical system. With all differences and therefore all problems for cooperation abolished, acceptance of the system as imagined by the Working Group appears as the sole rational option available for all involved. Everyone in the world will willingly adopt the system with all of the demands and constraints imposed on them by US libraries and when everyone has complied with our wishes we will “accept these data in a fully automated fashion.” Once this system is in operation the possible discrepancies between publishers’ definitions of *full* and

accurate and any particular library's understanding of the same qualitative matters is an issue that cannot arise, nor will the issue of the value of any user contributed metadata be considered.

The Missing Link, or Qualitative aspects of Bibliographic Control

All qualitative aspects of bibliographic control are related to users, institutional purposes and normative practices and therefore invisible and irrelevant to the functioning of the technical system as such. The system is imagined to work in a manner analogous to email: the message is delivered no matter what the content. Is it possible to consider a scholarly information system in this manner alone? To put the issue in different terms, information and misinformation are equivalent in any technical information system, but can they be understood as equivalent in a system used for scholarly communication?

Scholarly communication is not the only form of communication that occurs in libraries, but it is a very important form that relies on normative practices such as citation. In a report that the Working Group ignored, Malcolm Wright and J. Scott Armstrong begin with the statement "The prevalence of faulty citations impedes the growth of scientific knowledge."² This paper brings together three aspects of the problem: the problem of data reuse (drawing citations from sources other than the item in hand), violating the norms of a practice (bad research practices), and the social consequences of these errors (obstacles to the growth of knowledge). The Working Group ignores all these aspects of the practice of bibliography that have previously informed and guided our work as librarians. By rejecting item-by-item description the Working Group has repudiated the cardinal rule of bibliography in scholarly research: *de visu* inspection.

The report contains no evidence of seriously considering either bibliography as a practice or quality of data intended for human rather than machine interpretation. The system will ensure data quality through cooperation, Uniform Resource Identifiers and standards. The authors of the report demonstrate an extraordinary confidence in the cooperative tendencies of people who do not agree, a global willingness to adhere to a standard of our choosing, and the capabilities (present or future) of information technologies for dealing intelligently with problems of meaning. I do not share their confidence on any of these issues.

What if the available information is incorrect, inadequate or missing? Obviously if "the particular needs of the communities concerned" are to be satisfied by "allowing display and indexing of data elements to vary" as the Working Group suggests, then there must be someone locally devoted to the creation of that additional or variant information and the modification of existing information to fit those local needs. Yet those persons have been eliminated as inefficient in other recommendations and replaced with automatically generated or externally obtained information.

Academic Library Users

In responding to recommendation 1.1.4.2. that the Library of Congress "promote widespread discussion of barriers to sharing data" it is noted that users expect more information than the library ever attempted to provide in the past. Hundreds of tags are not unusual in web resources "so some users have expectations for hundreds of subject headings." Yet while insisting that we

² Malcolm Wright and J. Scott Armstrong, "Verification of Citations: Faulty Towers of Knowledge?" MPRA Paper No. 4149, posted 07. November 2007.

meet this expressed desire for more information, the Working Group dismisses as an “unproven assumption” (is that not an oxymoron?) the argument that all users will benefit from information created to support the most demanding users. “Users” everywhere want much more—and we must provide it! the Working Group insists—but the value for the broader community of providing much more is an “unproven assumption” which we must reject. Another glaring contradiction.

On page twenty-seven the Working Group identified the library community’s basic problem but it ought to be redirected to the Working Group itself. The Working Group, we must conclude, *needs to focus on identifying and addressing real needs with workable solutions and to guard against having un-validated assertions or professional ideology be the main drivers of development.* It appears that when real needs are expressed by real users, they are attended to selectively and ignored or rejected when they contradict the professional ideologies so clearly set forth in the Working Group’s report. And the solutions the report sets forth have already revealed themselves to be unworkable as I have been documenting in detail for the past five years.

One particularly revealing paragraph of the report may be found in the Background section on page eight. A number of recent library reports on our topic are mentioned and some of their findings and recommendations noted. Conspicuously absent from this discussion are any references to the report commissioned by the University of Chicago.³ Unlike the reports mentioned by the Working Group, the University of Chicago report was neither undertaken nor written by librarians but rather by a group of faculty members appointed by the provost. Unlike those other reports the University of Chicago report is a document in which the faculty make it clear what they want from the library. It is the perfect document to help us inform ourselves about user desires in the context of academic research, yet again unlike the other reports, the University of Chicago report was not promoted nor even publicly announced. The report was buried in silence as though it were regarded as simply user resistance to the library of the future. Is this how we librarians in our infinitely superior wisdom regard the expressed desires of our users? For the Working Group at least, the answer must be: Yes.

The University of Chicago provost’s report reads nothing like the report of the Working Group. For instance, the second general principle guiding the provost’s report is *Any plans for the future of Regenstein [i.e., the Joseph Regenstein library at the U. of Chicago] should be flexible. We are unable to predict the future demands with clarity.*

The fifth particular principle is the following:

The rapidly changing technical environment means that we need to develop serious instruction in library research. ... Yet most of our entering students of all levels have relatively minimal experience with library work. The Task Force is persuaded that there remain crucial skills of knowledge assembly that students do not learn on their own, and that a serious effort must be made to teach them.

Rather than recognizing the rapidly changing technical environment, the Working Group foolishly declares what the future will be, and although they go on at length about the importance of

³ <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/about/finalreport.html>

education for librarianship, user education is never mentioned. Instead, on page 31 of the Working Group's report we read that libraries must orient themselves towards the lowest common denominator and not seek to satisfy the sophisticated users.

The Working Group rejects user education as it does service to its heaviest users. The Working Group assumes that the "crucial skills of knowledge assembly" noted by the University of Chicago report are no longer important in the research process, for **the system will perform all of the work for our users, exactly as the Working Group assumes that the system will perform all of the librarians' work for the library**. Had the Working Group a little more self-knowledge, there would have been a single guiding principle:

We must let someone else do the work and be satisfied with whatever we get, for our users do not care and neither do we.

The Problems We Face

You will have noticed that my talk has been neither resistance to nor advocacy of past, present or hoped for future practices, standards or technologies. The primary issues that the report raises are not those of MARC, Dublin Core, LCSH, RDA, FRBR, Web2.0 or any other structure, standard, operating platform, technique or economic model. The primary issues are related to *what* we are doing, for *whom* and *why*, i.e. matters redefined by the working group in the Guiding Principles. These three questions will be answered differently by every community of bibliographic practice but the Working Group has presumed to answer for all of us. The real problems we face are precisely what the Working Group offers us as the solutions.

The Working Group's philosophy of bibliographic control is based on its understanding of what happens in libraries: What happens in libraries is the manipulation and exchange of data. In opposition to this fundamental assumption, I insist that what happens in libraries is communication among members of communities of practice occupying various roles in a system of communication: academic publishers, students, faculty and librarians in the system of scholarly communication; cartographers, commanders and programmers in military communication systems; and musicologists, copyright lawyers, musicians and music publishers in the music industry and music libraries. The problem of bibliographic control is not solely a matter of transport and warehousing but facilitating and improving that human communication.

Although the Working Group declared that the future of bibliographic control will be dynamic not static, the Working Group has understood the system of bibliographic control in terms of its architecture alone, ignoring its dynamics. It is in their misunderstanding of the social dynamics of the purposeful use of technical systems that the members of the Working Group demonstrate their inattention to the use of the system, their lack of research on socio-technical systems, the inadequacy of their model of the system and the debilitating effects of their assumptions about socio-technical systems in general and shared information systems in particular. Because the Working Group understood the problem to be a simple technical problem, like Vannevar Bush they offer the current technical system as the solution to all tomorrow's problems: problems of human communication are solved by data transfer, problems of meaning are solved by URIs and computational analysis, and the social problems of organization and conflicting purposes are

solved by simply demanding that everyone do what the Working Group thinks everyone ought to do: Cooperate!

Part 2. How Now Brown Cow? or The Future of MOUG

A matter that has been a concern of mine for a long time is the relationships between communities of practice and cataloging, bibliography and reference work. When it comes to resources for specific communities of interest I believe, to quote the Working Group, the “separation of the communities of practice that manage them is no longer desirable, sustainable, or functional.

Whether or not the future develops according to the vision of the Working Group, it seems to me that for music cataloging, as for all cataloging, bibliography and reference work, the division of work among librarians ought to be determined by the user communities of practice rather than along the lines of library practices. You will already know my reason why: in order to meaningfully communicate with library users about their needs and desires we must be involved in the same community of interests and practices. While this is the rationale for departmental libraries, we need to realize that the segregation of music collections from other types of materials as well as the functions related to them has been standard practice in many libraries mainly because of their physical characteristics and the necessity of having these managed by persons who can read music. In a digital library where all access is through metadata, the differences among these various types of materials is, at least in the thinking of the Working Group, no longer significant enough to merit special communities of bibliographic practice for their management.

What then? The selection, cataloging and reference work once performed by a librarian who was an integral part of the departmental life will become the responsibility of the main library and its generalists. The various aspects of library work will then be divided according to the library oriented tasks rather than united in the coherent management of a specific collection. From then on the collection will simply be a fragmented subset of the main library and the system considered as a whole will be expected to serve the user. In that system the management of what was once a carefully, deliberately and intelligently developed and managed collection will be the responsibility of an ever changing roster of persons with no knowledge of the collection as a collection and probably no involvement in the practices of those for whom the collection was being developed. The same cataloger and the same reference librarian will deal with both Roy Harris the linguist and Roy Harris the composer. But fortunately for most of you here, that is not the situation in music libraries, and that precisely because of the special position of music.

If we assume the vision of the future outlined in the Working Group report and an administration that still considers it important for someone in the library to have a knowledge of music, what might change? I think probably that the collapse of cataloging, bibliography and reference will be an attractive option for administration, and assuming enough such librarians for any given collection, a real step forward. A persistent critique of catalogers, classification systems and subject heading terminology is that they are oriented toward the librarian and incomprehensible for the users. There is a lot of truth to that. If the music librarian is involved in all aspects of music librarianship, then his or her participation in reference work will be a constant source of knowledge and ideas for improvement of cataloging and cataloging tools from the users’ perspectives, as well as guiding the selection of materials to support the interests and needs of a

constantly varying student body and faculty. In turn, the practice of cataloging will be an extraordinary aid in understanding the potential and limitations of the information available to the searching technologies in reference work. It will also, I hope, lead the librarian as bibliographer to carefully consider the costs and expertise required for cataloging in every purchasing decision since she will be doing the cataloging. And of course responsibility for developing a collection will provide an excellent perspective from which to provide consistent cataloging as well as advance knowledge for reference work.

What about the worst case scenario? If the big heads in the library world follow the mixed chorus of voices declaring that both collection development and cataloging are impossible and unnecessary in a digital library whose boundaries are imagined or intended to coincide with the limits of all the world's information, then I cannot see where there would be any room for music librarians. The question for music librarians is therefore whether there is any justification for a digital departmental library or at least a music specialist. If you would agree with me in thinking that the universe of all the world's information is too large a universe for anyone to navigate via the single box provided by a search engine, if you would agree that collection development conceived as limiting the universe of all the world's information to materials selected to support a particular community of interest and practice is not only justifiable but highly desirable, then your future library and the future of your problems of bibliographic control are yours to decide, develop and perhaps most of all to fight for.

Thank you. La lucha continua.